

THE DAYTONA GAZETTE-NEWS.

Vol. 15, No. 15

Daytona, Florida, September 12, 1903

Edw. Fitzgerald, Publisher

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DAYTONA, FLORIDA

Senator J. P. Taliaferro and Some of his Work for the State.

By Joseph Olt in the Atlanta Constitution.



HE talk that comes up from Florida about the possibility of opposition to the re-election of Senator Taliaferro has created a great deal of surprise here. It is not going outside of the record to say that no man with similar length of service in the Senate has made a more favorable impression upon his colleagues and upon Washington than has Senator Taliaferro. A highly successful business man before he ever thought of accepting public office, Senator Taliaferro brought to Washington qualities which are sure to mean success in this field. He is a man of splendid intelligence, a man whose energy is tireless, and one blessed with a personality which from the start won for him those friends which are so essential to the success of a public man in carrying for the interests of his constituents.

It was my good fortune to be in the midst of the fight at Tallahassee which resulted in Senator Taliaferro's election. I have known him well since he came to Washington and have watched with more than ordinary interest his success. I have thought that it might not be out of the way in view of the large number of subscribers to the Constitution in Florida, that I say a few words about the junior Senator from that State and the work he has done since coming to Washington.

Senator Taliaferro is not one of the talking members of the Senate. In all his four years' career he has never delivered an extended speech on the floor of the Senate nor entered generally into debate. In a tilt or two he has shown that he is of ready wit and sharp reply. It was not long before the quiet man from Florida was recognized as a diligent worker, one who took a practical view of things and had a direct and forceful and convincing way of putting them before his colleagues in the committee, where, indeed, the real work of the legislative body is done. And, not very long afterward, it was discovered, too, that he was a safe counselor who never champions what he believes to be wrong.

Florida, which is blessed with many men of eloquence, call him "Our Business Senator," and seems more than well pleased that she has departed from the old order of things in sending to Washington a business man rather than an orator. With him in the delegation is preserved the unity of things.

Mr. Taliaferro's one weakness, perhaps, is his regret that he is always reluctant to speak in public. His people in Florida, however, are rather glad of it, and point out the fact that Thomas Jefferson was never a public speaker, and that David L. Yule, Senator from Florida just before the Civil War, never delivered a speech, and yet accomplished wonders in laying the foundations for an internal improvement on which is built much of Florida's recent progress. Mr. Taliaferro has felt that he wasn't trained in the schools of oratory.

Perhaps it was because of the example of his first chief, Stonewall Jackson, the silent man, to follow whose fortunes in the valley of Virginia he ran away from the school of William Lincolnton. He was at Appomattox, and his famous apple tree, and was one of that handful of ragged and chivalrous soldiers in gray that laid down their arms and their hopes and turned their faces toward homes either desolate or in

ashes and, like most of them, showed that same indomitable courage against adversity in the work of rehabilitation they displayed in holding back the great army of Grant.

Virginia, however, was prostrate, her sacrifice was greater than that of any of her sisters; she had felt the effects of war more keenly; industries were paralyzed and opportunities scarce, certainly none were offered to the young man without means. Mr. Taliaferro was one of these, so with all his possessions in one trunk, he went to Florida. He entered the lumber business, lived in a lumber camp, endured all of the hardships incident to a life away from the centers of civilization, ate his portion beside the camp fire, and slept at times beneath the stars. In this life he was thrown into intimate relations with the plain people, shared their fortunes and misfortunes, hopes and ambitions and made friendships among them that hesitate at no sacrifice.

In Baker County, where he lived this life for several years, the people love to call him "Jim," and would be offended if

these bonds having been paid for a number of years, the Attorney General threatened suit. There was every likelihood of winning, and if the suit had been pressed, Florida would have been compelled to increase taxes to meet her increased obligations. The general Government had Florida's promise to pay in black and white, and Florida had no offset saving a claim in equity, but not one in law, as it had long been barred by the statute of limitations. However, through the work of Senator Taliaferro and that of his colleagues, the suit was deferred and, finally, in the last Congress, the claim was provided for in the omnibus claims bill and paid in full, the treasury check sent to Florida being for a net balance of nearly \$700,000. This sum will have its effect, if wisely spent, in reducing taxes.

In the same Congress, the first session of the Fifty-seventh, Florida's delegation got \$2,300,000 in the river and harbor bill. Of this amount \$1,300,000 was appropriated for the improvement of the St. Johns river, a 24-foot project from Jacksonville to the ocean being contemplated. The completion of this will result in making a great city of Jacksonville. After the disastrous fire of May, 1901, which swept an area of nearly 600 acres, the people there prosperously rebuilt their business homes and homes, having unbounded faith in the zeal and earnestness of the members of Congress from Florida. Subsequent events have only increased their faith.

The average Floridian is a fruit and truck grower. Certainly—by reason of being situated so far from the market—he pays the freight rates, deep water for Jacksonville is really deep water for Florida, and will open up a new avenue of commerce and an opportunity for competition. It is said that almost immediately after the passage of the act appropriating the sum referred to, a great steamship company began planning to have its ships enter that port and into competition for a coastwise trade now worth annually \$25,000,000. Florida's business men recognize that Senator Taliaferro and his colleagues have done in their successful river and harbor work more than any other four men ever did to lower freight rates for the people of Florida.

To illustrate the influence of Florida's junior Senator, it is a fact that he obtained one of only two amendments to the Cuban reciprocity treaty now pending in Congress and bearing a vote for ratification. The other was secured under the powerful pressure of the best sugar interests of the country, but Senator Taliaferro, so members of the committee on foreign relations say, got his practically single-handed and alone. The amendment takes cattle out of the 20 per cent. schedule and puts them in the 40 per cent. schedule. That is, cattle from the United States under the provisions of the treaty, will be able to enter Cuba at a reduction of 40 per cent. of existing tariff. Cuba's cattle trade is worth \$7,000,000 annually. The United States enjoys of this amount \$1,500,000 while Honduras, Guatemala and Mexico have the remainder. Their cattle are heavier than ours, and while there appears to be no discrimination under the old tariff, yet, by reason for the difference in weight there was an actual valorem differential in their favor. As a consequence they enjoyed a bulk of the trade. Mr. Taliaferro's amendment puts the differential very largely in favor of the United States, and under it south

(CONTINUED ON LAST PAGE.)

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